Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1.   (Currently Amended) A method of extracting related information from electronic files, wherein each file includes a plurality of records and wherein each record includes at least one field for containing data, the method comprising:

a)   **receiving a user designation of at least first and second electronic files, wherein the first and second electronic files comprise two-dimensional files, each having a plurality of fields and a plurality of records, and wherein the first and second electronic files have in common at least one common field in which similar data is stored for each record in each of the first and second electronic files;**

b)   **receiving a user input that designates one of the at least one common fields to be a key segment;** ~~in response to a user input that designates at least one field as a key segment, wherein a key segment comprises a field having pre-populated data and wherein the key segment field is common to each of a plurality of the records,~~

c)   **sorting the records of the first and second electronic files based on the key segment;**

d)   comparing **key segment** data **of the first and second electronic files** ~~contained in the key segment of each record of a first file to data in a related key segment of each record of a second file~~;

~~e~~b)   upon each occurrence of a match of ~~data in the~~ key segment **data** of a record in the first **electronic** file to ~~data in the related~~ key segment **data** of a record in the second **electronic** file, creating a record in a temporary electronic file, wherein the record in the temporary file includes ~~at least one field and wherein the at least one field includes~~ a copy of the matching **key second** data from the first and second **electronic** files;

     f) also upon each occurrence of a match of key segment data of a record in the first electronic file to key segment data of a record in the second electronic file, copying additional data from the first electronic file and the second electronic file into the record in the temporary file;

       ge) selecting data from the temporary file; and

       hd) outputting the selected data.

   2. (Original) The method recited in claim 1, further comprising thereafter deleting the temporary file.

   3. (Currently Amended) The method recited in claim 1, further comprising:

     for additional **electronic** files, repeating **at least** steps a̶)̶, b), ̶a̶n̶d̶ c)**, d), e), and f)** using an additional **electronic** file as the first **electronic** file and the temporary file as the second **electronic** file.

   4. (Currently Amended) The method recited in claim 1, wherein the first **electronic** file is stored in electronic form on magnetic tape.

   5. (Currently Amended) The method recited in claim 1, wherein the first **electronic** file is stored in electronic form on media selected from a group consisting of solid state memory, magnetic disk memory, and optical memory.

   6. (Canceled)

   7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein a record of the temporary file created upon a match of data between records in the first and second **electronic** files contains less than all of the data from the matching records of the first and second **electronic** files.

   8. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising selecting data from the records of the temporary file based in part on logic operators.

9. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein the logic operators are selected from a group consisting of less than, greater than, equal to, not-equal-to, less-than-or-equal-to, greater-than-or-equal-to, in and not in.

10. (Currently Amended) A system for extracting related information from electronic files, comprising:

a processor;

a storage device **having a plurality of electronic data files stored thereon**;

an output device;

~~a first electronic file stored on the storage device, wherein the first electronic file includes a plurality of records and wherein each record includes at least one field for containing data; and~~

~~a second electronic file stored on the storage device, wherein the second electronic file includes a plurality of records and wherein each record includes at least one field for containing data;~~

wherein the processor is configured to**:**

receive a user designation of at least one of the electronic data files as a first electronic files and at least one of the electronic files as a second electronic file, wherein the first and second electronic files comprise two-dimensional files, each having a plurality of fields and a plurality of records, and wherein the first and second electronic files have in common at least one common field in which similar data is stored for each record in each of the first and second electronic files;

receive a user input that designates one of the at least one common fields to be a key segment;;

sort the records of the first and second electronic files based on the key segment;

compare key segment data of the first and second electronic files;

upon each occurrence of a match of key segment data of a record in the first electronic file to key segment data of a record in the second electronic file, create a

record in a temporary electronic file, wherein the record in the temporary file includes a
copy of the matching key second data from the first and second electronic files;

 also upon each occurrence of a match of key segment data of a record
in the first electronic file to key segment data of a record in the second electronic file, copy
additional data from the first electronic file and the second electronic file into the record in
the temporary file;

 select data from the temporary file; and

 output the selected data ~~respond to an input that designates at least~~
~~one field as a key segment by comparing data contained in the key segment of each record~~
~~of the first file to data in a related key segment of each record of the second file, wherein~~
~~the key segment comprises a field having pre-populated data and wherein the key segment~~
~~field is common to each of a plurality of the records;~~

 ~~wherein the processor is further configured such that upon each occurrence~~
~~of a match of data in the key segment of a record in the first file to data in the related key~~
~~segment of a record in the second file, the processor causes a record in a temporary~~
~~electronic file to be created, wherein the record in the temporary file includes at least one~~
~~field and wherein the at least one field includes a copy of the matching data from the first~~
~~and second files; and~~

 ~~wherein the processor is further configured to select data from the~~
~~temporary file and output the data to the output device~~.

 11. (Original) The system of claim 10 wherein the processor is further configured to
thereafter delete the temporary file.

 12. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 10, wherein the first **electronic** file is
stored on the storage device on magnetic tape.

 13. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 10, wherein the first **electronic** file is
stored on the storage device on media selected from a group consisting of solid state memory,
magnetic disk memory, and optical memory.

14.   (Canceled)

15.   (Currently Amended) The system of claim 10, wherein a record of the temporary file created upon a match of data between records in the first and second **electronic** files contains less than all of the data from the records of the first and second **electronic** files.

16.   (Original) The system of claim 10, wherein the processor is further configured to select data from records of the temporary file based in part on logic operators.

17.   (Original) The system of claim 16, wherein the logic operators are selected from a group consisting of less than, greater than, equal to, not-equal-to, less-than-or-equal-to, greater-than-or-equal-to, in and not in.

18.   (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing a method comprising:

    a)   **receiving a user designation of at least first and second electronic files, wherein the first and second electronic files comprise two-dimensional files, each having a plurality of fields and a plurality of records, and wherein the first and second electronic files have in common at least one common field in which similar data is stored for each record in each of the first and second electronic files;**

    b)   **receiving a user input that designates one of the at least one common fields to be a key segment;**

    c)   **sorting the records of the first and second electronic files based on the key segment;**

    d)   **comparing key segment data of the first and second electronic files;**

    e)   **upon each occurrence of a match of key segment data of a record in the first electronic file to key segment data of a record in the second electronic file, creating a record in a temporary electronic file, wherein the record in the temporary file includes a copy of the matching key second data from the first and second electronic files;**

    f)   **also upon each occurrence of a match of key segment data of a record in the first electronic file to key segment data of a record in the second electronic file,**

copying additional data from the first electronic file and the second electronic file into the
record in the temporary file;

> g)   selecting data from the temporary file; and

> h)   outputting the selected data

> ~~a)   receiving instructions identifying two or more electronic files from
which to extract related information, wherein each file includes a plurality of records and
wherein each record includes at least one field for containing data;~~

> ~~b)   receiving instructions that designate at least one field in the first file to
be a key segment and that designate at least one field in the second file to be a related key
segment, wherein the key segment comprises a field having pre-populated data and
wherein the key segment field is common to each of a plurality of the records;~~

> ~~c)   comparing data contained in the key segment of each record of the
first file to data contained in the related key segment of each record of the second file;~~

> ~~d)   upon each occurrence of a match of data in the key segment of a
record in the first file to data in the related key segment of a record in the second file,
creating a record in a temporary electronic file, wherein the record in the temporary file
includes at least one field and wherein the at least one field includes a copy of the matching
data from the first and second files;~~

> ~~e)   receiving instructions identifying data to be selected from the
temporary file;~~

> ~~f)   selecting the data from the temporary file; and~~

> ~~g)   outputting the data~~.

19.   (Original) The medium of claim 18, wherein the method further includes
thereafter deleting the temporary file.

20.   (Currently Amended) The medium of claim 18, wherein the method further includes:

for additional **electronic** files, repeating **at least** steps a̶)̶, b), c)**, and** d)**, e), and f)** using an additional **electronic** file as the first **electronic** file and the temporary file as the second **electronic** file.

21.   (Canceled)

22.   (Original) The medium of claim 18, wherein the method further includes selecting data from records of the temporary file based in part on logic operators.

23.   (Original) The medium of claim 22, wherein the logic operators are selected from a group consisting of less than, greater than, equal to, not-equal-to, less-than-or-equal-to, greater-than-or-equal-to, in and not in.

24.   (Canceled)